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Data 400

For my mini-project, I plan to research the question: *What factors best predict whether a restaurant in the United States earns a Michelin star?* This relates to my three-course sequence in INBM and specifically to a food-related business course I took while studying abroad in Italy. I plan to scrape the Michelin Guide website for U.S. restaurants, which lists variables such as cuisine type and price ($–$$$). To enhance the data, I plan to add geographic and economic information, such as state or county-level income from publicly available sources. I believe these data sets will be accessible and manageable. Additionally, few studies examine Michelin recognition through a predictive, data-driven lens focused on the U.S.

My dependent variable will be binary: 0 = no Michelin star, 1 = one or more stars. This approach avoids issues that may come from the very small number of two- and three-star restaurants in the U.S. Independent variables will include cuisine type, price category, and local income levels. I plan to use logistic regression to test which factors are most associated with Michelin recognition, and also incorporate mapping tools to visualize where starred restaurants are located. I think the results could provide insights for restaurant owners about what traits, such as cuisine, price-point, and location, align with Michelin recognition.

Finally, I will consider broader implications. I plan to approach the data responsibly, keeping in mind how different cuisines are categorized and interpreted. This project may highlight disparities, such as Michelin stars concentrating in wealthier neighborhoods or favoring certain cuisines, raising questions about equity in the food industry. In sum, I believe this project combines cultural insight with business analysis, offering a different perspective on Michelin star recognition in the U.S.